

# 2 ex-CHPD officers file discrimination lawsuit

Allegations come 2nd time for force

BY DAN SCHWIND  
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

For the second time in six months, the Chapel Hill Police Department is facing accusations of discriminatory practices, this time in a lawsuit filed by two white former CHPD officers.

The lawsuit, filed in May by John Moore and Brandon Jones, names Police Chief Gregg Jarvies, Town Manager Cal Horton, former police Capt. Everette Johnson and the town of Chapel Hill as defendants.

Moore and Jones are seeking \$78 million in the suit.

Both sides in the case have filed a number of motions since the suit was filed, but no hearings have been held, and there is no timetable for the motion to move forward.

"There's no way to know when it will start," said Ron Cooley, attorney for the plaintiffs. "A lot of civil rights cases ... can end up getting dragged out for years."

Cooley said that his clients think they faced stiffer disciplinary protocols than female and minority colleagues and that the department has a history of such policies.

"We think we have a clearly defined pattern of discriminatory practices," he said.

Jones was forced to resign after

the town said he violated the civil rights of a black teenager who accused Jones of harassing and arresting him without proper cause during a traffic stop.

Cooley said Jones maintains that he followed police protocol to ensure his safety until backup officers arrived.

"He followed procedure," Cooley said. "Did he show bad judgment? Maybe, but he followed procedure." Moore had to resign after he interviewed a high school student regarding a computer hacking incident while wearing a shirt with an FBI logo and presenting an FBI business card he made.

The town maintains that Moore illegally portrayed himself as an FBI agent, but in the lawsuit, Moore states that he clearly identified himself as a Chapel Hill police officer.

Cooley said both plaintiffs also think that they were victims of "bad press" and that their personnel records were improperly released to the public.

"The allegations against these guys are nonexistent," he said. "But it's an absurd double standard."

In the 25-page lawsuit, Jones and Moore list complaints against each defendant and also include eight "examples (that) demonstrate a clear pattern, practice and standard operating procedure of discrimination ... by giving preferential treatment to female and minority employees of the Chapel

Hill Police Department."

The plaintiffs also allege in the suit that misconduct by female and minority officers — such as falsifying time cards, driving while impaired and obtaining property by false pretenses — was not disciplined in the same manner.

According to the lawsuit, most of the accused were allowed to return to duty, and none of the personnel records for the accused were released.

"It's clear that the first thing (the defendants) looked at was race and sex," Cooley said. "It's supposed to be a level playing field, but it wasn't a level playing field."

Neither Patricia Holland, attorney for the defendants, nor Jarvies were available for comment.

Catherine Lazorko, public information officer for the town of Chapel Hill, said the town and Horton declined to comment on the suit.

This is the second time in a year that accusations of discrimination have been directed at the CHPD.

In January, just a month after being demoted, Johnson filed a grievance saying there were racial motives behind his demotion.

But after three months of hearings with town officials, Johnson did not file a lawsuit against the town after he was permitted to retire with the rank of captain.

Contact the City Editor at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).

# Effort links students, town

BY MEREDITH LEE MILLER  
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

The last person most UNC students want to see knocking at the door is a police officer.

Chapel Hill police officer Leo Vereen had that in mind Saturday as he and other officers tried to inform students about being good neighbors in the community.

The Good Neighbor Initiative, which was created by UNC's student government in collaboration with the Chapel Hill Town Council, is aimed at creating better relationships among students and permanent town residents, Vereen said.

Re Jones, student government's chief of staff, said the body wants to maintain great relationships between the town and the University. He said Good Neighbor is not just a crackdown on students.

Officers are visiting the Northside and Cameron-McCauley neighborhoods through Wednesday, Vereen said.

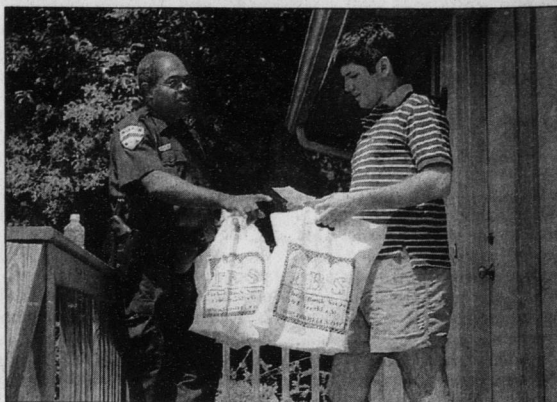
Discussions are crucial between the town and students in order for them to co-exist, Jones said.

In addition to speaking to students, police officers also are distributing packets that contain information about town services and coupons from local merchants.

They also include a welcome letter signed by Mayor Kevin Foy, Chapel Hill Police Chief Gregg Jarvies, Chancellor James Moeser and Student Body President Matt Calabria that encourages students to get to know their neighbors.

"We are trying to be proactive this year," Vereen said.

He said officers aim to visit at



Chapel Hill police officer Leo Vereen hands an informational packet to senior J.T. Newton on Saturday as part of the Good Neighbor Initiative.

least 350 student houses.

Vereen admitted that several students had shocked faces as they first answered their doors that afternoon but eventually relaxed.

"It's a great idea. I'm pleased the police found an interactive way of getting in touch with the community," said UNC senior Russell Lauten, who lives in one of the houses Vereen visited Saturday.

Last year, the department received several complaints from permanent residents, especially in the Northside area, about students having loud parties and music.

The police decided they needed a new approach to deal with noise violations instead of issuing citations to student renters.

The program is time consuming

and labor intensive, Vereen said as he drove through several Chapel Hill neighborhoods that traditionally have student renters.

He said he looks for physical indicators such as cars with out-of-state tags or recycling bins filled with beer cans that could suggest that students occupy a house.

"If it looks like a real party house, then they get a copy of this," Vereen joked as he held up a printed copy of the town's noise ordinance.

Despite the extra time officers must put in, Vereen said the project will succeed if there are less problems with student renters.

Contact the City Editor, at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).

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photo by Kristin Goode

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